

Bhikkhu Bodhi

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Arahants, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas, by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi (2010; 24pp./73KB)

For centuries, Theravada's arahant ideal and Mahayana's bodhisattva ideal have served as lightning rods of contention between these two schools of Buddhism. In fact, the author argues, a healthy and integrated Buddhist practice requires respect of both ideals.

The Buddha and His Dhamma, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2006; 14pp./41KB)

In these two lectures, delivered to an audience with almost no prior knowledge of Buddhism, Ven. Bodhi gives a clear, concise account of the Buddha's life and teaching.

A Buddhist Response to Contemporary Dilemmas of Human Existence, by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994; 11pp./34KB)

In this essay, presented at an interfaith conference in Sri Lanka, the author describes the "radical secularization" of human life that lies at the root of the manifold social problems in the modern world. Religious fundamentalism and spiritual eclecticism have emerged as two counterproductive reactions to this state of affairs. The author enumerates several fundamental tasks that practitioners from all the world's great religions must undertake as part of a sane response to the current crisis.

A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Acariya Anuruddha, general editor Bhikkhu Bodhi, pali text originally edited and translated by Mahathera Narada (1995; 20pp./60KB)

This is the Introduction to the 1993 revision of Narada Mahathera's 1956 classic guidebook to Abhidhamma philosophy, *A Manual of Abhidhamma*. The Introduction provides an outline of Abhidhamma philosophy and of the seven books within the Abhidhamma Pitaka and describes the relationship between the Abhidhamma and the suttas.

Dana: The Practice of Giving, edited by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1990)

See its entry under "[Various Authors](#)".

Discourses of the Ancient Nuns: (Bhikkhuni-samyutta), translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1997; 13pp./38KB)

A translation of the Bhikkhuni Samyutta (Chapter 5 of the Samyutta Nikaya), consisting of ten suttas that describe Mara's failed attempts to upset the equanimity and resolve of meditating forest nuns. With Introduction and detailed notes.

The Discourse on Right View: The Sammaditthi Sutta and its Commentary,

translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Ñanamoli, edited and Revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994; 48pp./145KB)

Translation of the Sammaditthi Sutta (Majjhima Nikaya 9) and its Commentary. This discourse by Ven. Sariputta explains many aspects of kamma, the Four Noble Truths, and dependent arising.

Going for Refuge & Taking the Precepts, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994; 49pp./148KB)

An excellent introduction to the purpose, meaning, and fruits of taking refuge in the Triple Gem and of observing the precepts.

The Lion's Roar: Two Discourses of the Buddha, by Bhikkhu Ñanamoli, edited and revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994; 29pp./86KB)

The Shorter Discourse on the Lion's Roar (MN 11) deals with the delicate question of whether different spiritual paths all lead to the same ultimate goal. If not, the question arises of defining the critical line that distinguishes them, and it is this question that the Buddha attempts to answer in this sutta. The Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar (MN 12) is a text of awesome scope and power in which the Buddha discloses the greatness and loftiness of his own spiritual endowments. Spoken as a rebuttal to the charges of a renegade disciple, the sutta has had such a powerful impact that in ancient times it was also known as "The Hair-Raising Discourse." [From the back cover.]

The Living Message of the Dhammapada, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1993; 11pp./33KB)

An invitation to the Dhammapada, Buddhism's most important collection of short inspirational verses.

Maha Kaccana: Master of Doctrinal Exposition, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1996; 31pp./94KB)

The Venerable Maha Kaccana was one of the foremost disciples of the Buddha, appointed by the Awakened One as the monk most skilled in explaining in detail the meaning of his own brief utterances. Often the other monks turned to Maha Kaccana for help in clarifying the meaning of the Buddha's condensed statements, and thus we find in the Pali canon a sheaf of suttas, all of great importance, spoken by this eminent disciple. [This book] offers a short biographical sketch of the Venerable Maha Kaccana, followed by a more detailed survey of the discourses ascribed to him in the Pali canon. These texts, always methodically refined and analytically precise, help to bring to light the far-ranging implications and profound relevance of the liberating teachings of the Buddha. [From the back cover.]

The Noble Eightfold Path: The Way to the End of Suffering, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1999; 78pp./235KB)

A concise yet thorough explanation of the Eightfold Path, the practical method the Buddha prescribed to uproot and eliminate the underlying causes of suffering. Basing himself solidly upon the Buddha's own words, the author examines each factor of the path to determine exactly what it implies in the way of practical training. Finally, in the concluding chapter, he shows how all eight factors of the path function together to bring about the realization of the Buddhist goal: enlightenment and liberation.

Nourishing The Roots: Essays on Buddhist Ethics, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1995;

26pp./78KB)

Four essays concerning the role of Buddhist ethics, not as a guide to interpersonal relations and social action, but as an integral part of the quest for purification and liberation.

The Taste of Freedom, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994; 6pp./19KB)

What is true freedom, and where can it be found? These questions have haunted humanity since the beginning of time, and are still with us today. The Buddha's teachings offer us a practical solution to this all-important riddle.

Transcendental Dependent Arising: A Translation and Exposition of the Upanisa Sutta, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1995; 38pp./114KB)

The seldom-studied Upanisa Sutta contains an important alternative presentation of the principle of dependent arising, offering a "roadmap" of the entire path of practice as it progresses toward final liberation.

A Treatise on the Paramis: From the Commentary to the Cariyapitaka, by Acariya Dhammapala, translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 55pp./164KB)



Although Theravada Buddhism explicitly advocates the attainment of arahantship as the ultimate goal, in the course of its historical evolution the Theravada tradition gave birth to a rich body of teachings on the practices of a bodhisatta, an aspirant to Supreme Buddhahood. In about the sixth century CE the great commentator Acariya Dhammapala collected and systematized these diverse teachings on the bodhisatta into a single treatise, which he included in his commentary on the late canonical work, the Cariyapitaka. This treatise, which draws freely from a Mahayana work entitled the *Bodhisattvabhumi*, provides a detailed examination of the ten *paramis*, the sublime virtues that a bodhisatta must practice over innumerable lives in order to reach the plane of supreme Supreme Buddhahood. This booklet contains a lucid and inspiring translation of this treatise, slightly abridged, which should throw a valuable sidelight on an aspect of the Theravada Buddhist often overlooked in popular accounts. [From the back cover.]

Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya: A Personal Appreciation, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1999; 7pp./22KB)

Bhikkhu Bodhi recounts with fond appreciation his years with the late Ven. Ananda Maitreya (1896-1998), Sri Lanka's highest-ranking and widely-venerated scholar-monk. (Also included: a newspaper account of the state funeral for Ven. Ananda Maitreya.)

Cover essays from the **BPS Newsletter** [1]

A New Undertaking, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

The author inaugurates his series of essays by explaining their chief purpose: to advance an accurate understanding of the cornerstone of the Buddha's teachings —

right view. (Summer 1985)

Two Faces of the Dhamma, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./6KB)

How do we reconcile the apparent contradiction that Buddhism is, on the one hand, a "religious" path calling for both faith and devotion and, on the other hand, a path of rational and critical inquiry? (Autumn 1985)

Vision and Routine, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

The key to keeping on-course on the Buddhist path lies in one's ability to persevere with the methodical and routine practice of meditation and mental cultivation, without losing sight of the ultimate, transcendent goal of the practice. (Winter 1985)

Purification of Mind, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

What does it mean to "purify" the mind, and how is it accomplished? (Summer 1986)

The Case for Study, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

What is the role of studying the Buddhist scriptures in pursuing the Buddha's path to Awakening? In fact, careful study of the suttas is essential if we are to develop a correct understanding of the Buddha's teachings. (Winter 1986)

Dhamma Without Rebirth?, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

Some contemporary teachers have claimed that the question of rebirth is extraneous to the core teachings of Buddhism. In fact, the notion of *kamma* and rebirth is the central defining principle at the very heart of all the Buddha's teachings. (Spring 1987)

Taking Stock of Oneself, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

Among the most crucial challenges we face in our journey down the Buddhist path is a willingness to see ourselves as we truly are — defilements and all. It is only with this kind of penetrating honesty about ourselves that we can begin to uproot the deep-seated habits of mind that cause our own suffering. (Summer-Fall 1987)

The Balanced Way, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

Our progress in the Dhamma depends in part on the degree to which we can develop within ourselves the twin virtues of renunciation and compassion. (Winter 1987)

A Look at the Kalama Sutta, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 4pp./12KB)

Some popular contemporary teachings claim that the Buddha advocates putting one's trust solely in what one can know and experience directly for oneself. In fact, when we take into careful consideration the context of this sutta, it becomes clear that this interpretation altogether misses a much more important point. (Spring 1988)

A Statement of Conscience, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

In response to the growing threat of terrorism in Sri Lanka, the author offers a reminder of the Buddha's timeless advice: "Considering others as oneself, do not hurt them or cause them harm." (Summer-Fall 1988) *

The Vital Link, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

As Buddhism takes root in the West, it shows ominous signs of decline in parts of Asia, where the youth often dismiss it as an irrelevant symbol of cultural and ethnic

identity. Here the author reminds his Asian audience that if the Buddha's teachings are to be kept alive for further generations, we must be willing to put them earnestly into practice ourselves, to set an example of kindness and compassion that is so sorely needed today. (Winter 1988) *

A Remedy for Despair, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

In a world full of such extraordinary suffering it becomes second-nature to many of us to turn aside from the pain of others, cast our gaze downward, and focus instead on our own immediate, private concerns. Equipped with an understanding of the workings of *kamma*, however, we can begin to see the world with more heartfelt clarity, with greater equanimity, free of paralyzing despair. (Spring 1989)

The Problem of Conflict, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./8KB)

We all yearn for happiness and concord, yet much of the world seems bound up in fear, aggression, and conflict. While we as individuals cannot hope to cure the world's problems overnight, there is still a great deal we can do that is of immediate help and immeasurably powerful: conduct our own lives with kindness and compassion. (Summer-Fall 1989)

The Quest for Meaning, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./8KB)

In a world increasingly dominated by the wonders of scientific progress and the lure of technological innovation, we can easily lose touch with that vital human drive to seek an ultimate, transcendent meaning to life. The Buddha's teachings offer both that transcendent goal toward which we can aim our lives, and a practical method of reaching it. (Winter 1989)

The Search for Security, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./8KB)

The search for happiness is one of our most basic drives. Even more fundamental, however, is our yearning for genuine security from the dangers and sorrows of life. The Buddha's teachings offer us precisely this, as well as the practical means necessary to deliver us there. (Spring 1990)

Self-transformation, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./9KB)

Much of our unhappiness arises from a dissatisfaction with the sense of who we are, so we quite naturally seek remedies that attempt to fill the void. What the Dhamma offers is something more: the opportunity to transcend self altogether, thereby freeing ourselves once and for all from its constrictive tyranny. (Summer-Fall 1990)

A Note on Openness, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

Some popular interpretations of Buddhism espouse the notion that our highest goal should be to expand our capacity to open ourselves to the full range of life's joys and sorrows, to shed our self-centered preferences, and merge at last with the unity of all beings and all things. Despite its superficially soothing sound, this teaching is far removed from Buddhism's real message of genuine freedom. (Winter 1990-91)

Laying Down the Rod, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./8KB)

In a world fraught with violence, the Buddha's ancient advice is just as relevant today: "Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not slay or incite others to slay." (Spring 1991)

An Auspicious Month, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 2pp./7KB)

An acknowledgement of two noteworthy events concerning the BPS: Nyanaponika Mahathera (founder of the BPS) celebrated his 90th birthday, and Ven. Piyadassi Mahathera (editor of the BPS's Sinhala language publications) was elected to the position of leading elder in the Sangha of the Amarapura Nikaya (Sri Lanka). (Summer-Fall 1991) *

The Nobility of the Truths, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

What is "noble" about the Four Noble Truths? (Winter 1991-92)

Refuge in the Buddha, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./9KB)

What does it mean to seek refuge in the Buddha? (Spring 1992)

The Five Spiritual Faculties, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./8KB)

An introduction to the five *indriya*, or spiritual faculties (faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom), and their role in the practice of Dhamma. (Winter 1992-93)

The Guardians of the World, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

An introduction to the two mental qualities that serve as safeguards of our morality, protecting both ourselves and the world around us from harm: *hiri*, an innate conscience or sense of shame over doing wrong, and *ottappa*, a fear of the consequences of wrongdoing. (Spring 1993)

Tolerance and Diversity, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 4pp./13KB)

An urgent question for the world today is how followers of different religious traditions can live together in harmony, without compromising the integrity of their separate traditions. The Buddha's teachings of tolerance strike a delicate and wise balance that avoid the perilous extremes of intolerant fundamentalism on the one hand, and a vague "all-roads-lead-up-the-same-mountain" universalism on the other. (Summer-Fall 1993)

From Views to Vision, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./8KB)

Although the Buddha teaches that clinging leads to suffering, there are some things — most significantly, Right View — that he insists are worth holding onto until we reach the end of the path. (Winter 1993-94)

Association with the Wise, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

The friends and associations we make in life play a crucial role in our progress along the path, as we inevitably absorb some of their qualities — be they good or bad. How do we learn to recognize and seek out the wise companion, the truly good friend? (1st mailing, 1994)

Dhamma and Non-duality, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 7pp./20KB)

Contrary to the stated goal of some other currently popular eastern religions and practices, the Dhamma is *not* concerned with the attainment of a state of "non-dualism," a condition in which the barriers between "self" and "other," or *samsara* and *nibbana*, finally dissolve. Nor do the teachings espouse "dualism" — or, for that matter, any *-ism* whatsoever. Rather, the teachings concern only suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation. (2nd mailing, 1994 & 1st mailing, 1995)

For the Welfare of Many, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./9KB)

A personal appreciation for the life and work of the late Ven. Nyanaponika Mahathera (1901-1994), who served as founder, editor, president and, most recently, Patron of the BPS. (3rd mailing, 1994) *

Toward a Threshold of Understanding, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 6pp./18KB)

A Theravada Buddhist response to Pope John Paul II's 1994 book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, which was unabashedly critical of — and remarkably ill-informed about — the Buddhist religion. Bhikkhu Bodhi here skillfully avoids any discussion of possible motives for the Pope's demeaning treatment of Buddhism, and instead addresses the specific doctrinal points that were raised in the book. (2nd & 3rd mailings, 1995)

Meeting the Divine Messengers, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

It was the sight of the four "divine messengers" — an old man, a sick man, a corpse, and a wandering ascetic — that propelled the young Bodhisatta from his complacent and luxurious princely life into the homeless life of a serious seeker of spiritual freedom. Then as now, these messengers appear all around us, not merely to incite us to discover how to cope with life's difficulties and dangers, but to inspire us to transcend them once and for all. (1st mailing, 1996)

Walking Even Amidst the Uneven, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 4pp./11KB)

Where can we find encouragement to progress toward our spiritual goals when we live immersed in a consumer-driven world that places such high value on material achievement? The Buddha's teachings here come to our aid, with advice ranging from how laypeople can live in harmony with their wealth, to his encouragement that we at least consider making the great renunciation that monastics have found to be of such incalculable support. (2nd mailing, 1996)

Message for a Globalized World, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 4pp./11KB)

Despite the glowing promises and forecasts of technologists, economists, and business leaders, we inhabitants of the emerging global marketplace have not yet found in technology any relief from our most basic ills: greed, violence, and meaninglessness. The only possible remedy to these ancient problems lies in our individual capacity to transform ourselves, to uproot the causes of our suffering once and for all. (3rd mailing, 1996)

Aims of Buddhist Education, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

In Sri Lanka, as across much of the world, the quality of formal education is deteriorating, as schools fail to instill in their students an appreciation for either learning, moral decency, or wisdom. By reintroducing basic Buddhist principles into the educational system it may be possible to restore some nobility to the schools and thus to the students they serve. (1st mailing, 1997) *

A Discipline of Sobriety, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./9KB)


A reminder that the five precepts — the most elementary guidelines of moral conduct offered by the Buddha — enjoin us not merely from drinking alcohol to excess, but from drinking *any* amount of alcohol. Clarity of mind and moral judgment are fundamental to the practice of Dhamma; alcohol easily undermines both. (2nd mailing, 1997)

Subrahma's Problem, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

Where is genuine security to be found? How can we be freed, at last, from fear? A deva once asked the Buddha these questions; the Buddha's answer still rings as true today. (3rd mailing, 1997)

Giving Dignity to Life, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1998; 3pp./10KB)

The Buddha's teachings offer a profound hope that can help erase the despair and cynicism so rampant in the modern world. Because each of us is personally responsible for the moral choices we make, by those choices we are all capable of bringing to our lives unsurpassed dignity, autonomy, and freedom. (1st mailing, 1998)

Lifestyles and Spiritual Progress, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 3pp./10KB) 


How does a person's choice of lifestyle — i.e., layperson or monastic — affect one's ability to make progress along the Buddhist path? (2nd mailing, 1998)

A Tribute to Two Monks, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 4pp./11KB) 

The author reflects on the lives of two great scholar monks who passed away in the summer of 1998: Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya and Ven. Piyadassi Nayaka Thera. (3rd mailing, 1998) *

Better Than a Hundred Years, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 4pp./12KB) 


Extraordinary advances in science and medicine promise us longer and healthier lives. But in this heady excitement let us not forget the Buddha's wise counsel: it is not how long we live that really counts, but to what extent we can develop and embody skillful qualities of heart. (1st mailing, 1999)

Two Paths to Knowledge, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 3pp./10KB) 


Religion and science offer distinct paths to different kinds of knowledge. Yet the Buddha's teachings show how both kinds of knowledge can be harnessed — for both the good of the individual and that of society. (2nd mailing, 1999)

Anicca Vata Sankhara, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 4pp./12KB) 

An overview of *sankhara* (formations, fabrications, etc.): its multiple meanings and roles in the Buddha's teachings. (3rd mailing, 1999)

Navigating the New Millennium, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 4pp./13KB) 

Writing at the turn of the 21st century, the author takes stock of two manifestations of suffering that dominate the modern era: collective violence and a gnawing sense of individual meaninglessness. Both, he argues, find an effective remedy in the Buddha's teachings. (1st mailing, 2000)

Two Styles of Insight Meditation, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 4pp./12KB) 

With the surging worldwide popularity of insight meditation, teachers have occasionally been tempted to "streamline" the practice, by teaching it as a secular activity divorced from the framework in which the Buddha originally presented it. In this essay the author urges meditators not to neglect the development of the full range of qualities necessary to bring about the transcendent release promised by the Buddha. (2nd mailing, 2000)

Does Rebirth Make Sense?, by Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005; 7pp./22KB) 

Newcomers to Buddhism, inspired by the down-to-earth clarity, directness, and immediacy of the Buddha's teachings, often stumble when they first encounter the teachings on rebirth. In this essay the author, while not attempting to make a scientific *proof* of rebirth's validity, shows that rebirth is nonetheless an eminently intelligible and sensible concept, and one that gives an ultimate meaning to the entire Buddhist path. (3rd mailing, 2000)

Note

1. Essays marked with an asterisk (*) will be primarily of interest to readers who are closely associated with the BPS and the Sri Lankan Buddhist community.



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